

# e-Bugle

Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 55

March 2008

No. 3



## Calendar

Wed., Feb. 27	Citizens Assoc. Mtg., Town Hall, 8 pm	Thurs., Mar. 13	Women's Club meeting, 7:30 pm, 4411 Cambria (Celia Hayes' home); see p 4
Sat., Mar. 1	GIVES collection, Penn Place, 9 am–1 pm	Thurs., Mar. 20	Casual Musicians Club Jam, Town Hall, 8 pm
Mon., Mar. 3	Weekly yard waste collection begins	Wed., Mar. 26	Citizens Assoc. Mtg., Town Hall, 8 pm; Nominations for Town Council election
Thurs., Mar. 6	Casual Musicians Club Jam, Town Hall, 8 pm	Sat., Mar. 29	Farmer's Market, Penn Place, 9 am–1 pm; Voter registration for town election, Town Office, 8–12 noon (see p 3)
Mon., Mar. 10	Town Council Mtg., Town Hall, 8 pm; town budget	Sat., June 14	Women's Club Progressive Dinner—save the date!
Tues., Mar. 11	Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm; <i>Bugle</i> deadline, 4 pm		

## Money Tightening

February's Town Council meeting was a sparse affair. Councilmember Solange Hansen was under the weather, and judging by the small number of citizens attending, it appears that flu season may be a bit nasty this year. That or the townsfolk stayed home in sympathy for Hollywood writers, who were still on strike that night.

Most of the discussion at this meeting surrounded money. Mayor Shawaker explained that, as usual at this time of year, the Council would examine the town's expenses and do a reconciliation, in order to get through the end of the budget year safely. For reasons not entirely clear to the Town Office, property tax receipts are down this

year. The bottom line, though, reported Town Administrator Ted Pratt, is that "the town is in a fairly strong position" for the 2008 fiscal year, with a year-end surplus expected. Councilmember Beth Irons did note, however, that a budget line for "dog waste management" seems to have risen precipitously. Yes, said Ted Pratt, the cost for waste bags the town supplies has gone up. Then again, people are using them. (Is that what they mean by a balanced budget?)

Unfortunately, there's a seriously uncomfortable fiscal prediction for 2009. Mayor Shawaker, who recently met with Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot, relayed his terse advice to munici-

*(continued next page)*

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palities: Be conservative in revenue projections. In other words, all that economic downturn we've been reading about is real. Next year's income tax receipts may be down. Highway user funds may not flow to towns. Open spaces money will "pretty well vaporize," said the Mayor. "I'm afraid we're going to have to be very, very conservative."

So if you were planning to ask the town to build a new baseball stadium or concert hall, you might want to hold off. Which is exactly the plan of the Garrett Park Elementary School Education Foundation, it seems. The nonprofit group is, among other projects, raising funds to supplement the school's new building, construction of which is slated to begin in 2010. In particular, as Barbara Ferry, the foundation's chair, told the Council, they are concerned about the stage. Garrett Park Elementary School, as many families can attest, has a tradition of musical theater. It's been the place to see "Music Man Junior," "Annie," and "Treasure Island." (Might "Spamalot for Kids" be in our future?) Well, the plan for the new school includes a woefully small stage, which has no wings. It's just a platform with walls and, presumably, a curtain. The foundation is trying to change that, hoping to raise somewhere between \$70,000 and \$80,000 for a thespian-worthy infrastructure. The next step in the process is to seek the Board of Education's OK to begin raising money. The Council voted unanimously that the town should write a letter of support. Given the budgetary warning signs, though, there was no promise of a town financial contribution.

In other business, Hans Wegner reported what should be obvious: Street repairs around town haven't started. Weather woes, wintertime availability of materials, and some issues related to drainage on Cambria have forced a delay until March. Everyone is frustrated, as well, with elevator problems in Penn Place that have caused collateral damage and repairs. And, as reported last month, a small change to the setback ordinance was formally proposed and will come to a vote in March. Fortunately that meeting will be two days before "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" debuts at Garrett Park Elementary.

Richard Folkers



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## GPES

Do you have a child who you think is ready for kindergarten? Will that child be 5 years old by September 1, 2008? If so, call the school (301-929-2170) to start the registration process, and to make an appointment for Kindergarten Orientation in April. If you have any questions about qualifications, ask them when you call.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade evening recorder concert had to be postponed because of the inclement weather. The students are rehearsing for the International Night that is planned. Clubs continue on Wednesday afternoons, although the second session will end up being short-changed because of weather and a half day off.

Mary Moyer

## Green Again

John Wilpers gave us a donation of \$37 to fund the banner for this issue of the *Bugle* in honor of his late wife Marian. We thank him and wish him well.

If anyone else is interested in donating for future issues, we are starting to collect for the 2008/2009 printing year. Just send a check for \$37, made out to the Citizens Association, to Box 98, Garrett Park, and we will see that you get on the list. Many thanks.

And did you pay your dues? In the last issue there was an envelope for you to use to send your dues in to the Citizens Association. Your \$20 per household (\$10 per individual) at a Garrett Park address is what funds this paper, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration, the Scary Porcupine Woods at Halloween, and the Town Dinner in January. If you forgot, or can't find the envelope, send along your dues to Box 456, Garrett Park 20896, and the Citizens Association will thank you.

Mary Moyer

Visit Garrett Park's Web site:

[www.garrettpark.org/](http://www.garrettpark.org/)

The *Garrett Bugle* is a publication of the Citizens Association of Garrett Park, published 10 times a year. Publication of the *Bugle* is supported by member dues. All residents of Garrett Park are members of the Citizens Association. Yearly dues (\$20 per family or \$10 per individual per address) can be sent to Citizens Association, Box 456, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

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Out-of-town subscriptions cost \$13 (first class) or \$10 (bulk mail). Letters to the editor can be submitted by mail or hand to *Bugle* staff or by e-mail. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity. Unsigned letters will not be printed.

# Town Administrator Notes

**Town Budget:** The Council is currently working on the budget for fiscal year 2009 (July 2008 through June 2009), which will be introduced at the regular Council meeting on March 10. If any resident has comments or suggestions regarding next fiscal year’s budget, he or she should contact the Mayor, a Councilmember, or the Town Office.

**Yard Waste Collection:** Weekly yard waste collection begins on Monday, March 3. Please remember to bundle sticks in lengths no more than 4 feet, and place clippings, leaves, etc., in paper leaf bags (no plastic bags, please).

**Large Item Pickup:** The next large item pickup is scheduled for Saturday, April 5.

**State Tax Form Reminder:** Please remember to write “Garrett Park” in the box labeled “City, town or taxing area” when filling out your state income tax forms. This ensures that our community receives its fair share of the income tax revenues that the state distributes to the 23 counties and 157 incorporated cities and towns throughout Maryland. This revenue supports many of the services the town provides to residents. Also, the Town Office can provide copies of most IRS forms, so stop by if you need any.

**Town Elections 2008:** Election Day in Garrett Park will be Monday, May 5. Polls are open 7–11 am and 4–7:30 pm. The terms of office for Mayor Carolyn Shawaker and Councilmembers Beth Irons and Hans Wegner are up this year.

Nominations will be held at the Citizens Association meeting on Wednesday, March 26, with the Candidates Forum set for Wednesday, April 23. Additional nominations may be made by written petition signed by 10 registered voters and filed with the Town Office by 12 noon on Monday, April 14. The last day to register to vote in this election is Saturday, April 5. (To be eligible to vote you need to be registered with Montgomery County, or on the list of qualified noncitizen Garrett Park residents.) Absentee ballots will be available Wednesday, April 15, through Friday, April 25, and may be mailed to you or picked up at the Town Office. Emergency absentee ballots may be requested after this date if some unanticipated situation prevents you from being able to come to the polls—please call the Town Office if you need an emergency absentee ballot.

If you have not voted in the last five years, your name will have been withdrawn from the active file by Montgomery County, and you will need to reregister. You may register at any time by calling the Town Office for the necessary forms (or for address change forms). You may also register in Town Hall during normal office hours. Special registration hours will also be held on Saturday, March 29, and Saturday, April 5, from 8 am until 12 noon at the Town Office. Please call the Town Office with any questions regarding registration, qualification of voters, nominations, etc.

Ted Pratt, Town Clerk-Administrator

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## One Person’s Junk...

“Pre-owned”—“gently used”—you’ve heard all the euphemisms for things that are not new. “Used” carries with it a negative connotation, but I suggest that we take a fresh look at re-using older items. I’m not the first to think of this, by any means; consider eBay’s popularity. Many homeowners are now renovating or building on additions rather than buying or building new homes. When you have a choice in what you buy, a “pre-owned” item may prove to be just as satisfactory while reducing the amount of new materials needed to create the new version of that item. Here are just a few ideas—you may already be recycling without thinking of it that way!

- Magazines—Share a subscription with a couple of friends. Because of the instant news we already get on the internet and TV, magazines now carry articles that tend to have a longer shelf life.
- Books—Walter Johnson has an annual used book sale; it’s a great way to donate books you no longer need (unless you’re like me and come home with more than you donate!). Wheaton Library takes used books, too, including children’s books.
- Technology (known in our house as “gadgets”)—Find a place to donate older, but still

functional, computers when you get your new one. Many schools are anxious to receive them for students who cannot obtain their own, and have special publicity drives asking for donations. Numerous nonprofits (such as women’s shelters) now ask for old cell phones for their clients.

- Clothing—There are at least five good consignment stores in our immediate area, for buying and consigning both children’s and women’s clothes. Several thrift stores also take clothing that is still in good condition. Or stage a clothing swap with some friends.
- Go antiquing—Howard Avenue (both west and east) is a treasure trove of antique stores to fit almost every taste. Some stores even offer recycled teak wood furniture, reducing the pressure to use new wood obtained from rain forests.

As always, the Garrett Park Climate Action Now (CAN) Committee welcomes ideas and new members. Look for meeting announcements on the GP list serve or in the *Bugle*. Please share any suggestions for this column with Lisa Kaeser.

Lisa Kaeser

## Bugle Notes . . . Sweet and Sour

- ♪ On January 18, Connie Gordon died of multiple myeloma at Suburban Hospital. Connie taught many of the youngsters of Garrett Park in kindergarten at GPES. She was there for 25 years before she retired in 1998. Her cheerful visits back to the school after her retirement will be sorely missed.
- ♪ Marian Green heard from Paul Edlund in January. They are settled in West Yarmouth, Massachusetts, and are nearer to Christa and Karen. (The only family member missing is Paul junior, who lives with his family in Frederick.) After living here for 40 years, they found that breaking away was very tough to do.
- ♪ We heard from Walt Damtoft and his wife Nancy also during the holidays. Walt recovered nicely from a small stroke, but then fell and fractured a vertebra. He then found that he had bladder cancer and is hoping for remission after four weeks of chemotherapy. We wish him well and hope for a speedy recovery (and no more health crises).
- ♪ The Swimming Pool Association is starting to plan the 2008 season. If you wish to work at the pool this summer, you should send a letter to GPSPA (Box 244). This includes people who worked there last year. Lifeguards must be at least 15 years old and have certification in life guarding, CPR and First Aid. Desk attendants must be at least 14 years old. Letters must be submitted by February 29, 2008.
- ♪ Be thinking about the possibility of baby or pet sitting during the summer, or doing chores such as mowing or yard work. We'll be asking for the information soon.
- ♪ Ken and Glenda Ingham are happy to announce the birth of their first granddaughter, born December 18, 2007, in Hermosa Beach, California. Proud parents Kristen (Ingham) and Michael Mullaney and big brother Jack are all doing well.

### Garrett Park Post Office

Many of you have met our lovely Postmaster, Divane Pittman. She came to us from Brentwood, Maryland, in August. She urges residents who are planning a large mailing, such as invitations, to consult with her first to find the most economical way to do so. She is also interested in developing a program to mail messages and packages to those who are serving in Iraq or Afghanistan. If you have not yet had a chance to talk with Divane, please stop and introduce yourself. If you have questions about the Postal Service or need help with your mail, please speak to her or call her at 301-933-2580.

Carolyn Shawaker

### Women's Club News

Every woman in Garrett Park is automatically a member of the Garrett Park Women's Club, with no dues to pay. The meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm. On March 13, the meeting will be at the home of Celia Hayes at 4411 Cambria Avenue. Join us to begin planning for the Progressive Dinner, which will be held on Saturday June 14. And mark your calendars to save the date for this popular community event!

#### *Alterations/Sewing*

Professional alterations/sewing in my White Flint home. Call Gabby, 301-933-4381.

References: Glenda, 301-933-5689; Dana, 301-379-4943.

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## Letter from the Mayor

Now that I am on the Maryland Municipal League's Legislative Committee, I am back in Annapolis a day or two a week. Last week, in addition to the Committee meeting, I attended the Maryland Mayor's Conference. Here are some of the highlights of the meetings with various state officials:

John Porcari, Secretary of Transportation, told us that of the \$400 million of new money allocated during the Special Legislative Session, \$250 million will go to maintenance of the existing transportation system. This year the state will spend \$160 million replacing and repairing bridges, and \$150 million for resurfacing of highways. Another \$200 million will be used for new projects, such as \$63 million for an interchange at Randolph and Georgia Avenues, and \$100 million for corridor city transways and the Purple Line. In addition, \$80 million will be invested in MARC commuter trains. The MARC system's three lines could be available to 90 percent of Maryland's population. The MARC system will be extended from Union Station to connect with VRE (Virginia Railway Express), Virginia's equivalent of MARC.

It is the objective of the Maryland Department of Transportation, to help create transit-oriented development areas. Counties and municipalities will be involved in examining their land use policies to identify areas to be so designated.

Lt. Governor Anthony Brown told us that the Defense Department's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) plans are expected to account for 15 percent of the growth and development of Maryland in the next 10 to 15 years, as well as 1.5 million new people coming to Maryland in the next 10 years. BRAC is now being considered in all state transportation and school planning. Last year's budget provided new money of \$400 million for school construction. This year's budget provides \$333 million for new school construction. BRAC will bring 28,000 new households and 500,000 new jobs.

Governor O'Malley is urging DNA testing in the case of arrests for violent crimes. Homicides are down 28 percent, but highway deaths are up 5 percent, so he is also strongly advocating speed cameras as a safety measure. He is proposing several energy bills to increase efficiency, conservation, renewal sources, and incentives for alternative sources. He is putting emphasis on adult education as a component of workforce development. Several new centers will be created to assist in reintegration of returning veterans. He is creating a new Department of Information Technology with a focus on ensuring that all the elements of the state government will be able to communicate effectively with each other. He has started a program to help people facing mortgage problems. It offers up to \$15,000 in loans so that people are able to become "current" on their mortgage payments and will be in a position to refinance their homes. He promised more if it becomes apparent that more will be needed. Foreclosures are up over 600 percent from a year ago, with over 7,000 homes currently in foreclosure. The Republican legislators are pushing for a repeal of the 1 cent added to the sales tax. He pointed out that this would drain away highway user funds and many other monies that currently go to municipalities.

I talked with Comptroller Franchot, Senate President Mike Miller, and House Speaker Mike Busch also. They are concerned about the economic downturn and revenue problems. The next couple of years will not be easy for any level of government.

In the next couple of weeks I will be in Annapolis several days for committee meetings and to testify on several bills that have effects on the town or our residents.

A large thanks to Butch, Frank, and Jose for the excellent job they have done making our streets clear. And please read the article on the NEAR Committee (p 6).

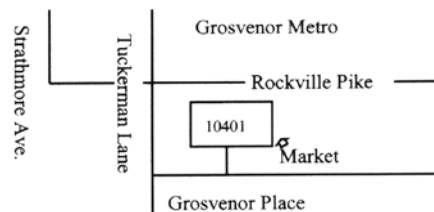
Carolyn Shawaker



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# Assistance Available

The Neighbor Essential Action Response (NEAR) Committee has been exploring ways to provide assistance to town residents of all ages who may need some help. Our Town Assistant, Elizabeth Henley, points out that there is an immense range of services available in Montgomery County, such as transportation for seniors or the handicapped, child care, counseling for women, career counseling, “child link” for ages birth to 5, and many, many more. One example is the File of Life project, sponsored by the Montgomery Emergency Rescue Services. The File of Life is a magnetic file in which you provide emergency information on your medications, etc. It is intended to be attached to your refrigerator, where the Rescue Squad will look for it if there is an emergency at your house.

If you would like help identifying more of these services, please call the Town Office, 301-933-7488, between 9 and 12, Monday through Thursday, and ask Elizabeth to refer you to the proper office for assistance. If you wish, she will

make calls to find the specific person and number you can call.

The committee members will be offering further information on the services of Montgomery County on Saturday, March 1. Watch for us in the Post Office.

If the power goes out or you need help during the day, call the Town Office. You may call the following committee members if you need help or if you would like someone to assist you with filling out a File of Life.

Committee members are as follows:

Linda Knowles and Barbara Thompson

Phyllis Kaufman

Kathy Gagnon

Eleanor Melville

Elizabeth Henley

Carolyn Shawaker